

ST. AUGUSTINE

CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT

*A PLEA FOR REUNION OF THE
CHURCHES OF CHRIST*

BY

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WITH A PREFATORY NOTE BY THE LORD BISHOP
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PREFATORY NOTE

My friend and old Cambridge student, the Author, asks me to prefix a few words to *St. Augustine, Catholic and Protestant*. I respond, after a careful perusal of the book, with cordial good-will.

It is not that every detail of the following chapters commands my concurrence. From some passages that cannot be classed as details, I should take the Author's friendly leave to dissent, however guardedly. But this is no barrier to my feeling and expressing a very high opinion of the book as a whole, an opinion such as to make me greatly desire that it should find a wide circle of thoughtful readers, and should leave a fruitful impression upon their views, purposes and hopes.

To find an underlying region where the two great ideals here dealt with, Catholic and Protestant, may attain a working harmony, is the Author's aim, and he takes St. Augustine's mind and faith as a grand historical illustration and elucidation of the possibility. The study, conducted without the least pretension, is full of noteworthy insight and suggestiveness, and

ought to inspire much further thought. The two historic words, Catholic and Protestant, have both been grievously "soiled with ignoble use," but both are full of the majesty of truth, developed in great experiences. For myself, to be perfectly frank, I view them with less sense of mutual *antithesis* and more sense of mutual *complement* than the Author has done. I should be disposed to say, as the late Lord Hatherley (*pium et venerabile nomen*) once said, in the House of Lords, "I am a Protestant because I am a Catholic." But after all, this is a question rather of explanation of terms than of discussion of phenomena. Mr. Clark has described and discussed, with great ability, certain unquestionable phenomena of religious sympathy and tendency, often denoted by the two terms in question, and has considered their possible conciliation; and there lies the real message of his book.

At the present moment, when a longing for genuine reunion, in the light and love of the Lord, is so much in the Christian air, I believe that this modest but pregnant treatise may prove a real and precious contribution to processes of thought and will which move towards that sacred end.

I have found every page worthy of attention, and I think that many other readers will feel the same impression.

HANDLEY DUNELM.

PREFACE

"SIRS, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" This thought must often rise to the minds of thinking men, as they look at the religious life of the Churches of our Land to-day. English Christians are brethren in one great family of earth, and brethren, too, in the far greater family of heaven. And yet the Christian brotherhood of England stands divided in the midst. The Church of the Nation and the "Free Churches" of the land stand in rival camps, voicing differing ideals of Christian life and thought. The Catholic standards of the one are met by the Protestant traditions of the other, and the nation is invited with insistence to choose between their claims. And meanwhile, great national evils abound, unchallenged and unhealed, which the union of all the resources of our Christian life alone can cure.

Such, briefly, is the position. A nation sore beset with social and intellectual and moral ills looks for relief to the Christianity within itself, and finds division and irrelevant discussion between the rival camps. There can be little

wonder if it turns away from the faith of its fathers, and looks for relief to some of the specific remedies of the passing hour. The crying need of our day is the reconciliation of the sundered forces in the Name and power of their common Lord, and we may find cause for hope in the strength and harmony of that gathering volume of true religious life, which cannot find any rest for the soul amid the disorders of our English Christendom.

On the one side, the Church of England has spoken recently with the calm and deliberate voice of her assembled bishops. The tone is restrained and devotional, as befits the theme, but practical, and tense with conviction for the Truth once seen. And over all and through all there breathes the atmosphere of Christian love, which gives full credit to convictions other than its own. On the other side, true and earnest are the teachings and the strivings of some individual leaders of "Free Church" life, whose lives pour forth a rich fragrance both of beauty and of strength in the service of their fellow-men.

And yet, with all this, the difficulty abides. The expressions of mutual affection and esteem which are a marked feature of our religious life to-day, will do much to create the atmosphere in which the underlying difficulties will be solved, and that is no mean achievement. It is a great thing that the variance of views of Truth should be tempered by the clear light of Love;

but the differences remain, and each view will be treasured as vital by the soul that has seen it. That soul will contend for it as for property, for it is his, and for him instinct with the Life of God, Who is Truth.

It will, therefore, be impossible to rest in expressions of mutual regard. It will be necessary to fall back and down upon the underlying truths which each maintain, and try to find their reconciliation in some deeper unity. It is with some confidence that we turn to the study of one of the greatest of the Fathers of the Church. In St. Augustine the Protestant we find the Father of the Reformation, with all its strong *pro*-tests, or rather *pro*-testations, on behalf of the truths dear to the individual soul. It is to St. Augustine the Catholic that we turn, when we desire to correlate the authority of the Church with the pressing claims of our own soul's needs.

Our study, after all, may lead us but little way in the direction of our longing and our prayer. But to find our varied views of Truth harmonized in one spacious personality is no small matter, and affords a historic ground for hope.

There he stands, and anything which may interpret him afresh to our age will be for spiritual gain. To recall to our minds the fervour of that devotion, whose tears are not yet dry on pages written fifteen centuries ago, is to

kindle Protestant devotion to a brighter, purer flame. To watch the strivings of that mystic soul as it clings, as for its very life, to the old foundations of Apostolic Truth, enshrined once for all within the Christian Church, is to welcome afresh a vital portion of the heritage of the Christian soul.

We shall try to deal, however inadequately, in the following chapters with six points of primary importance. First, we shall note the ideals of union in the prayer and in the purpose of the Lord, and emphasize the urgency and necessity of its fulfilment. Two great difficulties will suggest themselves which need consideration, one in individual character, the other in modern Church life. In our third chapter we will endeavour to let St. Augustine live before us, as one to whom these practical hindrances were of vital moment in the history of his own soul, and who found a solution not in logic, but in life.

Four practical principles will be deduced from the study of his life and work, which can be adapted to the needs of Church life to-day. Then we pass on to a brief consideration of the place which the Bible and the Church have held in the two systems of thought, and an attempt will be made to gather them together round the living Person of the Lord, of Whose Life the Bible is the living record, and to Whose Presence the Church is the living witness. The

duties and the responsibilities of the Church of England will form the subject of a final word.

All that follows has regard only to the relation of the Church of England to the "Free Churches" in our midst. The Church of Rome does not fall within the purview of the writer's thought. All must recognize with the Committee of the Lambeth Conference that "any advance in this direction is at present barred by difficulties which we have not ourselves created, and which we cannot of ourselves remove."

Readers of Professor Harnack's volume on Augustine in his *History of Dogma*, and of Dr. Gwatkin's recent book, *The Knowledge of God*, will know how greatly the writer is indebted to them both in thought and expression. This little booklet makes no pretence to originality. It expresses thoughts gathered from many writers, and inverted commas will tell the story of his debt, as far as may be, though he cannot always trace the source of the phrase or of the thought.

It would only add one voice to the chorus of those who, by the double service of prayer and labour, would seek to fulfil the petition of our Lord—

"That THEY ALL MAY BE ONE."

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ST. AUGUSTINE

CHAPTER I

THE IDEAL OF REUNION AND THE PRESENT NEED.

THE call for Reunion is gathering volume to-day, and it is a significant sign of the times; but stronger and louder echoes yet will the call have to awaken, if the sheep of the Lord are ever to be gathered into "one flock," according to the purpose of the Mind of Christ.

In the first place, what is the Unity we seek? Let us clear our minds at once by one straight look at the words of the Master's prayer, "THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE, EVEN AS THOU, FATHER, ART IN ME, AND I IN THEE." Let us denude it, consciously at least, of nothing of its purpose and power. Let us humbly marvel at the "EVEN AS" of the Master's word, and pause, and, if we will, awhile take breath. What it means may engage only the most reverent and humble thought. We shall take our shoes from off our feet, for the secret place which we would enter is holy ground.

Thought fails when we would peer into the

relation of the Father and the Son. We can only use the language of men, and speak in the terms of human personality. We think of the identity of Heart and Mind and Will, in God the Father and in God the Son. The love wherewith "God so loved the world" is the same love with which Jesus "loved unto the end." And so with the Mind and Will of God the Father; it was the Mind and Will of God the Son, because one, and holy, and divine.

Such is the prayer and the purpose of the Lord for the members of the Church, which is His Body. "THAT THEY MAY BE ONE," profoundly one, in the Love which binds souls as one in the eternal Love of God. One in Thought, which only finds its unity in the Eternal Truth. One in Will and Purpose, as it coincides finally and perfectly with the Will of God. This, then, is the answer to the question, "What is the Unity we seek?" In the name of our common Christianity, we can accept no lower ideal than the expressed purpose of our Lord. Under the shadow of the Love, the Thought, the Purpose of the Eternal, there is room for all Christians, in the harmonies of a single life, "hid with Christ in God."

The first thought that arises is the spaciousness of the ground common to all Christians. Without doubt there is much identity of *purpose*. "Thy kingdom come" is the sincere and heartfelt prayer of all. "On earth, as it is in heaven"

is the final aim of every Christian's life. There is much that witnesses to a growing spirit of *love*. Many are sincerely trying to trace the lineaments of their Master in the face of those from whom they differ most, and where they see them they rejoice. In the vast areas of Christian *character* and conduct all are "one," in the ideal of the moral stature of the man in Christ. In the sphere of *creed* there is the great body of Christian truth, which all hold dear as life itself. But the realm of *thought* presents the scene of most divergence, and it is there that we must look for the deeper unity which will comprehend all the varying views of Truth. It is to this search that the best minds are turning with hope and confidence. Men not infrequently come to realize that the Truth they see is best expressed, and perhaps can only be expressed, in the form of antitheses, each of which must be held securely, and between which lies the Truth. For the moment they must be content with that, but they will anxiously await the advent of some larger Truth which will contain and reconcile them both. And if the exigencies of personal thought demand this from the individual, surely we may recognize and welcome the possibility of that larger unity which will soften the hard outlines of modern conflicting thought.

In some such way as this might the great prayer of the Master be fulfilled within the Church, "which is His Body." We have no

desire to silence discussion in the interests of a peace which is no peace. Nor, on the other hand, can we possibly accept divergence as our final presentation to the world of the Mind of Christ. "The divine purpose of visible unity amongst Christians is a fact of revelation."¹ But we still look for a practical community of thought and feeling and will amongst all those who claim to be disciples of the Lord.

If this be the definition of the Unity we seek, we may pass on to consider briefly the necessity and urgency for its speedy fulfilment.

Our Nation feels the pressure of the mighty questions that await solution. Industrial problems face us on every side, and threaten the very foundations of our social fabric. Intellect is active in every sphere, throwing even God and man into the crucible of thought, and leaving often only a residuum of lifeless fact. New forms of spirit phenomena are emerging both from the subliminal areas of human personality, and from the depths or heights of spirit life; and where shall the nation turn for guidance, unless it be to the people within her who can voice the highest and the best of Christian Truth?

There are, of course, leaders who advertise their own specifics with loud and discordant emphasis, but the thoughtful know them to be blind leaders of the blind, who both will fall into the ditch of moral and spiritual loss,

¹ Lambeth Conference, Resolution 58, 1908.

But where is the utterance of faith and power, echoed from the thousands of pulpits of our land, which will direct the nation into Truth? We do not look for, nor do we desire, some dogmatic moral or spiritual panacea, even though it be signed and put forward by the highest authorities. But we do demand that the body politic shall have one soul,¹ to whose voice it may listen without the discordant din of party cries. It will be as hard, no doubt, for the nation to solve her mighty problems according to the dictates of the religious life within her, as it is for the individual to obey the "still small voice" of the soul within. But at least let its voice be heard, single and alone, in the councils of our land. The nation has a right to ask of the Churches within herself that in the critical issues of her policies at home and abroad, the moral and spiritual effects shall be plainly set before her.

This was the theory of olden days. The Archbishop of Canterbury has been, and still is, the official servant of the State in her spiritual

¹ "A godly English patriotism which honours the nation as having a divine calling, is a doctrine at once cast aside as 'Erastian' by many of the clergy and some of the laity of the Church of England. Erastianism may have two meanings. . . But it is used to represent a conviction that a nation is a sacred work and instrument of God, and that it belongs to God's designs for the well-being of mankind that a people should express its faith in the living God through ordinances of confession and worship."—Dr. J. Llewellyn Davies, Introduction to *The National Church*, by Canon Henson.

constitution, but it would be impossible to contend now that, in point of fact, he voices *ex cathedrâ* the spiritual ideals of the English people as a whole. And yet no one else can do it with a fraction of his influence and power. And this is the point to which we are feeling our hesitating way. Many Churchmen are anxiously looking for platforms upon which they may stand shoulder to shoulder with "Free Churchmen" in the interests of the nation they would serve. Social amelioration, temperance reform, and those activities which honestly accept in fact, as well as in name, the *interdenominational* position are welcomed as affording opportunities for common service in the common Name; and wherever the sundered forces reunite there is a quickened moral life, for point and force are given to the joint appeal.

And when general effect is given to the recommendation of the Lambeth Conference Committee that "private meetings of ministers and laymen of our own and other Churches should frequently be held, in which, by common study of the Word of God, by frank and friendly discussion, and by united Prayer, they could at once realize and deepen the sense of union in the fellowship of Christ,"¹ then surely shall we have "not compromise for the sake of peace, but comprehension for the sake of Truth," in the full unity of the Mind of Christ.

¹ Lambeth Conference Report, p. 186.

CHAPTER II

TWO DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF REUNION.

It is well to have clearly before our minds the highest ideal of Christian Unity, and also the fruitful work it alone can do in the destinies of our land. But we do equally well to set out plainly the difficulties and hindrances which lie in the path. There are many external difficulties which will no doubt have to be seriously reckoned with, but the internal ones which concern individual character and life, are the more vital and abiding. We think then, first, of the hindrances which arise from the varieties of individual religious experience and character, and, secondly, from the different organizations of modern Church life.

In the Parable of the Talents, students of the Word and of human nature have detected in the words of Christ "to every man according to his several ability," an indication of the existence of an original temperament or character in the individual, which is made the basis of further special endowments from the Lord. Great pro-

blems may thus be seen to loom out of the mysterious shadows of human personality, but these will not concern us now. It will suffice for us to recognize that there has been impressed upon us in our deepest selves, a character which will in some sense primarily influence for us our views of the things of God. And when we keep to the broad facts of religious experience, one cannot fail to recognize the existence of two types of mind, strongly contrasted but equally sincere, in their view of the Truth as it is in Christ. Professor Gwatkin puts the contrast somewhat thus :—To the disciplinarian, Christ is the Living Bread which came down from heaven once for all, in the reign of Cæsar Augustus. To the mystic, He is the Bread ever coming down, and ever giving life to the whole world. The one looks back to a majestic memory of the Faith once delivered to the saints : a Church once for all set up with a sacred trust of Law and Ordinances. . . . The other lives by a growing Revelation, and a growing knowledge of an everlasting Person. . . . These are two great theories of Christianity contending ever since its origin. Is the Gospel Law or Life? Is the Lord's Teaching, or His Person, final Truth? ¹

Many will be inclined probably to word the contrast otherwise, but in any shape the difference abides. It has often determined the strange

¹ *Knowledge of God*, vol. ii. p. 57 ff.

religious differences within a single home, and its history is written in the largest of letters over the story of the Christian Church. Broadly, they may be called the Catholic and the Protestant conceptions of the Truth, but the names must not disguise from us the fact that they represent different and contrasted types of mind, which may be found to underlie our unhappy divisions.¹ And in saying this, we do not desire, after the manner of some, to construct an apologetic for these divisions, relying on fundamentally varying views of truth. Our sole purpose is to seek for some larger unity in which conflicting views may find a reconciliation; and, therefore, it is necessary to have full regard to essential contrarieties of character which underlie them.

First, then, the Catholic soul clings round the objective reality of a Church, founded by Christ, and carried on by His Apostles and their successors down the stream of time. This visible and Divine Society for them enshrines all those gifts of grace and truth with which

¹ The *positive* content of the word "Protestant" must never be forgotten.

"And yet I wyll do it vnder this protestation, cal me protestant who lusteth, I passe not thereof. My protestation shall be thus: that my mynde is & ever shal be (God willyng) to set forthe syncerely the true sense and meanyng (to the best of my vnderstanding) of Goddes moste holy woorde."—Bishop Ridley: *A Breffe Declaration*, 1555, Bishop Moule's Edition, p. 113.

Christ has enriched mankind, and outside of it are found only the uncovenanted mercies of God. The Catholic gives the warmest of welcomes to outside aids in matters of faith and doctrine. The authority of the Church is soul-satisfying, because finally representative of God. The Sacraments are full of spiritual food just because they are outward and visible signs, ordained by Christ Himself, of the unseen realities. The nearer an earthly minister can represent in the holy functions of Worship the priestly work of Jesus Christ, the more calmly can the Catholic soul rest on the spiritual truth of which it speaks. We note a full sense of mystery, which must be half hidden, half revealed, in beauty and dignity; a certain distrust of the intuitive longings of the soul, and a jealous suspicion of the workings of the mind in things divine.

The great fact of Law and Order is so impressed upon Catholic religious life that all deviation is received with suspicion and alarm. Just in so far as the principles of conduct can be embodied in definite precepts, it rejoices to fulfil them. Fastings, prayers in the Church, almsgiving, form the staple exercises of the life of the Catholic soul.

In the Protestant we cannot fail to recognize quite another and contrasted type. In his eyes the Church holds a place of secondary importance. Her authority weighs but little in the balance with his own convictions of the Truth.

"Private judgment is the most sacred of rights, because it guarantees the most sacred of duties," writes Dr. Dale, when he wants to remind us of "the most solemn and awful obligations to walk in the Light of God, when it shines upon us direct from Heaven." "No ecclesiastical authority," he contends, "has a right to come between God and my soul."¹

To this type of mind, the gifts of Truth and Grace through Christ are ministered directly through the Spirit to the individual soul. The Sacraments are valued as a test of obedience, as a solemn memorial, as a social bond, but the outwardness ministers but little to the inwardness of spiritual life. Worship is too personal and engrossing to be in any vital sense dependent on the minister.

"Nature and History are frankly laid under contribution as vehicles of revelation."² The confines of mystery are thrust back with a confident hand. He wants truth plain, and the Oracles of God are accepted as they stand in their direct appeal. "Doctrines are marked out in crude, if logical forms." Law in his mind is often transcended by a higher law, and he is ready to recognize the sound of the wind blowing as it lists, even though the leaves of the Tree of

¹ *Protestantism: Its ultimate principle*, p. 43.

² "Their (the Protestant) distrust of reason was real . . . but their especial distrust was rather of the philosophy, the science, the criticism which furnish materials for the work of reason."—Gwatkin, *Knowledge of God*, vol. ii. p. 245.

God rustle violently, and perhaps disorderly, in some strong movements of the Breath of the Spirit.

As regards conduct, he pays more heed to the essence of sin than to the forms in which it is manifested, and he appraises the motive rather than the deed. And withal, he has ministered mightily to the depth, if not to the breadth, of the religious life of the nation, and has placed vast and enduring monuments of beneficence to the credit of his faith.

In some such way as this, briefly and imperfectly,¹ may the contrast of our individual "abilities" appear, to which the same truths do in fact make a varying appeal. Herein will surely be found one deep cause of cleavage, not through lack of love of one another, but through the very intensity of our love of Truth, as each has seen it for himself.

And we may not stop here. These strong views have cast their shadows over the whole land in organized communities, and the diffi-

¹ "To oppose 'Protestant' to 'Catholic' as if the one service excluded the other is a trivial trick of proselytizing controversy lying below the notice of serious men, but here and now, the great division of mental attitude and moral judgment which severs the man who exalts the religion of the New Testament above the Church, and the man who only reads the New Testament through the Church, faces us. Do we judge ecclesiastical institutions by the ideas of the Gospels, or the ideas of the Gospels by the verdicts of ecclesiastical institutions? It is an ultimate divergence of religious conceptions."—Hensley Henson, *The National Church*, p. 405.

culty which meets us here is intensely practical. As men are constituted, it is inevitable that "the manner of spirit they are of" should seek to clothe itself with a body of its own, both for its own life and for its proper presentation to the world. Therefore we shall not wisely object to the existence of communities, but we shall anxiously scrutinize them to know whether they do accurately interpret and express the spirits they represent. And great difficulties will lie just here. The varying receptions of Truth have by no means found legitimate utterance in the great communities which represent them. The rallying cries have brought much irrelevant matter to entrench the position of the one as against the other. The camps, legitimately distinguishable perhaps on the basis of the "several ability" to receive and to use the endowments of the Lord, are set not in the comradeship of common service, but in the antagonisms of suspicion and disdain. Patiently will the historical scholars of our day have to unravel the tangled skein of modern religious life in England. To detach from modern Churchmanship all that is not truly Catholic, and from modern "Free" Churchmanship all that is not truly Protestant, will be a work demanding no ordinary measure of wise sympathy and patient faith.

Here, at least, we can see our way. "Spirit and spirit can meet," we firmly believe, however various, in so far as they are true to the Christ

they know. But the Community which falsely interprets and expresses the one spirit, can never meet in the harmony of perfect Truth another Community which unworthily embodies the other: and here lies the secret of much of the failure of the past.

There is profound need for self-examination, in the clear light of truth and love, of the claims on either side. Is the Catholic conception of the Church one that can be held, *sub specie Æternitatis*, without grave misgivings as to its negative and exclusive side? Is true Catholicity finally and essentially bound up with episcopacy,¹ or is the tenacity of this belief just the

¹ "No definition of the Church is given (in Church formularies) which would expressly exclude from it all bodies which have not the Historic Episcopate. . . . It is as though the Church said to nonconforming Bodies—'We will not take it upon ourselves to unchurch you. We will waive the question of the *esse* of the Church, using language in our definition of it which may possibly include you. But we know what belongs to our *bene esse*, and that we will scrupulously guard.' . . . This is the position of the school which has been called that of the Anglo-Catholic divines, in the seventeenth century, and it has been, and is, I believe virtually that of a vast number of English Churchmen . . . This view is, however, unquestionably less definite than that held for the most part in the ancient Church, and also than that which English High Churchmen have since Tractarian days felt it their duty to insist on."—Stanton, *Place of Authority in Religious Belief*, p. 205.

It is most necessary, however, to guard against the common error of assuming that the utterances of the ancient Church Fathers are as true to-day as they were when they were written. In the actual circumstances of the days of Ignatius, for instance, his statements were literally true; *e. g.* without a

last phase of that age-long struggle, wherein authority claims divine appointment as the final justification for its life, independently of its actual value to the world? Tsar and Kaiser claim their thrones still as of divine decree, and therefore their monarchy is to them of the "*esse*," not only of the "*bene esse*" of the State. The case of monarchical episcopacy is a crucial point, on which men of thought and men of prayer will have to give a "yea" or "nay." Or, again, what is the true significance of that "great complex of movements"—Ritualism? Is it truly Catholic in its origin and in its developments? Are we all agreed that ritual is only the true expression of what is *first* true doctrine? Is the sacerdotal aspect of the Christian Ministry Scriptural and primitive, and has it been received *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*, and so received the hall-mark of the Catholic Faith?

And, on the other hand, we shall ask of true Protestantism whether private judgment, high

Bishop there was no Church. . . Outside was heresy of a deadly sort, and his faithfulness to Apostolic Truth was the main bulwark of the Faith. The contrast in his days was between the Apostles' teaching and fellowship represented by the Martyr-Bishop, and error and schism represented by arch-heretics. To-day, as against Nonconformists, it is impossible to contend that this contrast still stands, and therefore many of the utterances of the Early Fathers on the subject of Episcopacy cannot fairly be quoted in the controversies of our time.

and holy as its sanctions are, must not be always tempered in the spirit of humility, by submission to the collective voice of the Christian Church. Can a doctrine of verbal inspiration ever be a final truth, which virtually identifies the "frenzy" of heathen inspiration with the Christian ideal, in the suppression of all human personality by the Spirit that inspires? Are its theories of Atonement essentially and only expressible in terms either of "transaction" or of law? Is there no shaded ground in doctrine and life of awe and mystery, where Catholics and Protestants can stand together as brothers, breathing the one Life of God? Is Protestantism tied to a doctrine of dualism, a conviction that some tracts of life are sacred, some profane; and will it really lose its purity if it seek to touch life all round "with upward impulse"? Is it so individualistic that it cannot be made effectively to subserve social ends? Can it never feel "the spiritual value of the human body, and of material earth" as they act and re-act upon the human soul? For are not soul and body co-partners in a spiritual life that begins on earth and never ends; and may not outward and visible sacraments be mysterious vehicles of spirit-life to both?

These and many other vital matters will make us cry out in earnest intercession for the "pre-
vailingly intellectual" operation of the Seven-fold Spirit, Who is "wonderful in counsel and excellent in working."

As we have said, many other difficulties lie in the path of a true Reunion, on the lines of the Master's prayer, but these two that we have named are fundamental and vital, and concern both the deep processes of individual character and temperament, and those institutions which as "lengthened shadows" stereotype them for good or ill.

If we can set our Churches in more perfect conformity with legitimate, if varying, ideals of the Truth of God, then suspicion and criticism will die down, and in the clearer light we shall see that larger unity which can join *all* hearts in one Baptism, one Faith, one Lord.

CHAPTER III

ST. AUGUSTINE—CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT —REUNION IN HISTORY.

It is a commonplace of History that when the world needs a man, the man is there. The explanation is that he is at once the gift of God, and the ripened product of his times. One of the greatest curses that ever fell from the lips of God's prophet upon Israel, was that no great man would arise to deal with the crises of her national life. The times may produce the Man, but he is the gift of God.

At the close of the fourth century, the shadows darkened over the world and over the Church. The Empire of Rome, great and glorious under the early Cæsars, was decaying, and almost ready to vanish away. The old ceremonies of pagan worship fixed by Augustus 350 years before, had long lost their hold, and the spiritual cravings of men had turned to "the mysterious wisdom of the ancient East." But they had turned away unsatisfied. The worships of Mithras and Serapis were, for the multitude,

dead, and the "Christian times" had brought no salvation for the State.

The new century brought no light into the gloom. And now in A.D. 410, Alaric was at the gates of Rome, and men's hearts failed for fear as they saw him take possession of the Eternal City.

But the man was there, the gift of God to the world and to His Church. Augustine stood at the end, and at the beginning of great epochs in the march of time. He was the ripened product of the age past, but he was the gift of God for the time to come.

"The history of piety and of dogma in the West," says Professor Harnack, "was so thoroughly dominated by St. Augustine from the beginning of the fifth century to the era of the Reformation, that we must take the whole time as forming one period."¹

Down the varied channels of Christian life and thought, for a thousand years, we can trace clearly the vitality and the fulness of the man. His mighty soul, surcharged with passion for God, pours itself forth in words that breathe and burn. The soul is writhing under the pressure of divine longing and love. Words are made to bear the weight of life, and their expression is full of anguish and of pain. With David and St. Paul, all Nature is ransacked to furnish parallels for the breathings of a soul athirst for God.

¹ *History of Dogma*, Book V. p. 3.

Yet the soul is alienated from God by reason of its sin, and its burning longings are succeeded by the chill of fear. That God is a consuming fire, and who can stand before Him when He is angry? Repentance finds vent in agony and tears, and then a glimpse of hope comes to light up the gloom, for "God hath not forgotten to be gracious, neither hath He shut up His loving-kindness in displeasure." This, if we read aright,¹ is the spiritual picture of the man. Passionate desire for God finds first its check in fear, then its expression in repentance, finally its crown in hope.

But across the darkened shadows of this soul's life, there suddenly shone the glory of the presence of the Deliverer, Jesus Christ. It was the work of a moment, and fear, repentance and hope were lost in peace and joy through faith and love. We can read the story told in his own wonderful words in the *Confessions*.² We can almost watch the heavings of that surging bosom as he writes: "It was I who willed, I who nilled, I, I myself. I neither willed entirely, nor nilled entirely. I was at strife with myself and rent asunder. With what scourges of condemnation lashed I not my soul, that it might follow me, striving to go after Thee! Yet it drew back, refused, yet not excused itself." We can hear the gasp of a

¹ Harnack, *History of Dogma*, Book V. p. 67.

² Book VIII.

momentary breath in the words, "Thus soul-sick was I, and I said, 'Be it done now, be it done now,' and as I spake, I all but enacted it. I all but did it, and I did it not, yet sunk not back to my former state, but kept my stand hard by, and took breath."

We can almost feel the tug of the flesh upon his soul as we read, "The very toys and vanities plucked my fleshly garment and whispered softly, 'Dost thou cast us off for ever?' I much less than half heard them, but they did retard me. Then there arose a mighty storm bringing a mighty shower of tears. I arose from Alypius; solitude was fitter for the business of tears. . . . And Thou, O Lord, how long? how long? to-morrow? to-morrow? Why not now? Why is there not this hour an end to my uncleanness?"

But the end of the struggle was at hand—the Divine Voice was heard. Obedience to the command, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," was the secret of his deliverance, final and complete.

And in this spiritual experience, as with St. Paul, Augustine laid the foundation of the theology which dominated the history of the Christian Church for over a thousand years. The central place was ever the personal relation of the soul to God through Christ; and round that focus, all the circling orbits of creed or conduct had to find their coherence and their life. Next to St. Paul, here is the Father of the Reformation

with its great *pro*-tests on behalf of the soul's privilege of direct access through Christ into the Presence of God. He has experienced the gospel of saving grace and power, given freely and directly by God to the humble believer in His Son. With amazing wealth of argument drawn from the deeper reasonings of the soul, he elaborates the great doctrines of sin and grace. Perfect inward sympathy with the spirit of the Bible calls out new and brilliant flashes of truth from familiar words. His spiritual intuition pierces to the depths, and the heart of God and the soul of man stand revealed together in the God-Man, Christ. *Fecisti nos ad Te, et cor nostrum inquietum est, donec requiescat in Te.*

But there is another side of the man. By no means has he transcended the limitations of earthly life, while thus finding soul-rest in the Divine. There are many factors which soon demand attention, both of the soul and of the mind. The soul is deeply conscious of its own limitations and its need. In every strong religious faith there is found to be "necessity for an appeal, at some decisive point or other, to an external authority."¹ There are moments of

¹ "Only academic speculation thinks that it can eliminate external authority: life and history show that no faith is capable of convincing men, or propagating itself, which does not include obedience to an external authority, or fails to be convinced of its absolute power."—Harnack, *History of Dogma*, Book V. p. 82.

crisis when the outward and visible are called for peremptorily by the soul, in order to minister to its need of inward grace. The inner impulses of each man's faith cannot supply always and infallibly the certitude he needs. If it were so, mankind would not be the moral and spiritual ruin that he is.

It comes to us almost with a shock to read the experience of St. Paul in this regard. "I went up by revelation," he writes to the Galatians, "and I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles—but privately before them who were of repute—lest by any means I should be running, or had run in vain." Do we rightly understand that at one decisive point in his missionary career, he felt the necessity for an appeal to James and Peter and John for confirmation of the gospel which was his very life? If so, then all lesser men will give a welcome to the Divine society—the Church established by Jesus Christ—as it comes into view, to satisfy the cravings of the individual soul.¹

And what the heart welcomes, the mind must interpret along the lines of the words of Christ. That Church must have a twofold function. To

¹ "Individualism has too much truth in it to fail in strength. It cannot be counterbalanced by anything, but by insisting on what the Church of the New Testament really is."—Archbishop Temple, quoted by Gore, *Mission of the Church*, p. 154.

the individual Christian soul, she must speak in the very accents of her Lord, whether in comforting the heart, or in instructing the mind, or in disciplining the life. She must be the perfect outward expression of the Spirit of Jesus—that is the Body of Christ, speaking with His authority because breathing with His Life. And, secondly, in her relation to the world, she must witness by the very principles of her life to the *sole reality* of the unseen and the eternal. She can rest content with no dualism, such as sacred and secular, carried out into every sphere. She will claim every department of life as a province of her Lord. And this she can effect, under the Master's seal, by the working principle of a sacrament, which can make every outward visible thing bear witness to an inward and spiritual truth or grace.

In some such way as this, we can realize how and why it is that the individual soul, which claims the Incarnation as the final truth, finds objective support to its own life and health in a true conception of the One Holy Catholic Church. The Church is effective only when she is in deed and in truth the Body of the Living Lord, quickened by His Breath and moving with His Life—but then she is supreme. The Sacraments have power only when they let the shadow of the Eternal fall on things of time, and make them speak of God.

But Church and Sacrament alike must trace up

their origin and powers to the Word of God,¹ if they are really to avail in the spiritual needs of the individual and of the world. The fountain of their life must be hid with Christ in God, or else they are man-made devices which cannot stand. The proof of the divine origin of the Church has been set forth in countless volumes. One compact system, whose logical consistency has worked itself out in impressive forms, witnesses in unguarded statements to the reality of this side of Truth. But other systems which modify the undue emphasis in fuller accordance with the proportion of faith, witness in their own measure to the spiritual powers of the Holy Catholic Church, and to the efficacy² of the outward and visible signs of invisible truth and grace. These have their place in the deepest life of the individual Christian and of the Christian community, in their relations to the Lord and to the world.

This is the other side of Truth which engages the long and anxious thought of Augustine. His purpose was to show men that they needed an external authority for the life of the soul, for the interpretation of Holy Scripture, and for the purity, permanence and presentation of the Faith, whether as creed or conduct, as truth or life. "Grace and authority," according to Augustine's

¹ "It is to Augustine that we owe the phrase 'Minister of the Word and Sacrament.'"—*History of Dogma*, v. 156.

² '*Efficacia* signa'—Art. 25.

self-criticism, "had effected his conversion,"¹ and the emphasis on grace must not seem to deny or minimize the other factor of his spiritual life. To him the One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church had its fount and its stream in the Eternal Love. Its Unity rested in the single Life of the Holy Spirit of God, revealed in a practical unity of faith and hope and love. Its Holiness rested only in its union with Christ, the Holy One of God. Its Catholicity "furnishes with its unity, the most impressive external proof of its divine origin and purpose." Its Apostolic character is proved by its Apostolic truth, and by its very existence traceable back to the Apostles. In a word, "Augustine created the Catholic doctrine of the Catholic Church on earth."²

All this and much else is developed with amazing wealth of argument and illustration in his abundant writings, and witnesses to the necessity for his own soul's life of this aspect of Truth.

The work, then, of Augustine was twofold. It was to proclaim the doctrines of sin, and of grace through faith in Christ, and to construct a theory and practice of a Church that would enshrine and conserve and proclaim the Truth.

The antithesis between the two conceptions can no doubt be drawn in hard and uncom-

¹ Harnack, *History of Dogma*, v. 143.

² *Ibid.* pp. 144-150.

promising lines. It may be asked, After all, is the soul to look for and await divine guidance in direct personal fellowship with God, or indirectly through the Church? Is independent faith in God always and truly compatible with constant obedience to the Church? In some such way as this it would be easy to state these two aspects of Truth so that the resultant would be simply the balance of superior argument on either side; or it might suffice to leave them side by side as unreconciled antinomies of Truth. But neither of these would have been of any service to the Church in those old days. Augustine was face to face with two great heresies, either of which would have overwhelmed the Church, had they prevailed. One by one these attacks had to be met by the fullest statement of the Church's Faith. Against the Pelagians he had to fight as for the very life of the Church for the doctrines of original sin, and salvation by grace alone. It was a long and severe struggle, and to the contest we owe the armoury of argument which secured the triumph for the Truth. On the other hand, against the Donatists, who would have wrecked the Church through schism, he had to frame an effective reply. They demanded separation from a Church which was not all pure, and their re-baptisms and their re-ordinations would soon have rent the Church asunder. But Augustine's reply saved her from disruption. "He showed that men's souls needed external

authority, and that the Church was that authority.”¹ He set up the conception of a Christian commonwealth through which salvation flows forth to the individual, and whose service is the individual’s highest concern.

These struggles serve to give us the background of his thought, and there can be little doubt that in the stress of controversy much was incorporated which laid the seeds of confusion and discord in after times. The supremacy of Rome, and the horrors of the Inquisition, may be traced to Augustine’s doctrines of the Church. The fact that a general consciousness of sin too often acts as a narcotic in the face of definite forms of evil, may perhaps be traced to his doctrines of grace.

But our point is that the two conceptions found their reconciliation in a single life, lived possibly not in strict logical consistency, but in that infinitely deeper consistency of a “life hid with Christ in God.” In the words of Professor Harnack, “St. Augustine created that interweaving of the freest, most personal surrender to the Divine, with constant submission to the Church as an institution in possession of the means of grace.” Or again, “Augustine first transformed the authority of the Church into a factor in personal religion, and not less novel was the energy with which he combined for practical piety the categories of God, Christ, the Word of God, the

¹ Harnack, *History of Dogma*, v. 143.

Sacraments and the Catholic Church. He gave the central place to the living relation of the soul to God. He took religion out of the sphere of the *cultus*, and demonstrated and cherished it in the domain of the deepest life of the soul. On the other hand, we will have to show that while establishing the sovereignty of Faith over all that is natural, he did not surmount the old Catholic foundation of the theological mode of thought.”¹

The position that Augustine holds between the conflicting camps is well illustrated by the fact that only in the last century was he deposed from the honoured place of “Chief Doctor” in the Roman Church. For many centuries he was enthroned in that office, but the Church of Rome got restive under his supremacy, when they found that the heretics could quote him with tremendous effect against her.² They replaced him by Liguori, a smaller man, but a safer teacher of purely Roman doctrine.

Is there not here a meeting point for Catholics and Protestants of our time and generation, if only they can grasp it, each for the other’s sake?

The solution of our difficulties lies in the old Apostolic words, IN CHRIST. Elsewhere there can be found no Unity of binding power. Truth and life have often been buried under Protestant scholasticism as well as under Catholic theology, and so it will be again. Every age will fashion

¹ Harnack, *ibid.* v. 66.

² Gwatkin, *Knowledge of God*, vol. ii. p. 182.

its own armoury of argument adapted to the modern mind, and unless we frankly admit to ourselves that reconciliation will be sought in vain in logic, we shall be treated to full re-statements of positions which cannot make for peace.¹ As Bishop Robertson puts it: "The Church may be regarded in two ways, either as the external Society bound together by the Sacraments and the hierarchy, or else as the sum total of those now on earth who are predestined to Eternal Life."² To the one the authority of the Church and her spiritual censures will be final, and admit of no appeal. To the other the only appeal will be to God, since no final authority, episcopal, papal, or conciliar, has ever yet appeared upon earth. To the one the Church will ever be the form, not the substance; to the other, the Church will ever and only offer the substance through the form. These two views of truth will strive for mastery as long as there are men who see them, and therefore they will contend for them as for the Truth once delivered to the saints.

But what is needed is not emphasis on two con-

¹ Bishop Westcott's estimate of our national characteristics in this respect is true and just. "The English character is disinclined to seek the completeness of a theological system. It looks to finding the truth through life rather than through logic, for truth is not of the intellect only. It is patient of hesitation, indefiniteness, even of superficial inconsistency, if only the root of the matter can be held firmly for the guidance of conduct."—*Lessons from Work*, p. 22.

² *Regnum Dei*, p. 222.

flicting views of Truth, but a single view of Christ the Truth. The Catholic must recognize that his peril lies in the possibility that the Personality of Christ may be lost, that his concern with the inheritance left by Christ may blur the outlines of his heritage in Christ Himself. The Protestant must see that his peril is none the less real because it does not lie just there. He is apt to forget that spirit *and body* form the man, not the spirit by itself; that "the Word was *made flesh*," not spirit-wise alone; that the outward was, and still is, a vehicle of inward and spiritual life. The religion of "the Word made flesh" essentially recognizes and demands an outward constitution for the expression of the spirit-life within, both in the individual it moulds and in the society it creates; and it can only breed error and confusion to neglect or despise that which God has ordained. Only in the single view of Christ the Truth, will the true doctrine of the Church come into view, which is His Body—"the fulness of Him Who all in all is being fulfilled." ¹

Let a parable illustrate the truth. As the steel filings cleave to the magnet, drawn by mysterious compulsion which they cannot explain and cannot resist, they are silently filled by that same power; and are now drawn, not less to the centre, but each to the other in response to the mutual

¹ Armitage Robinson, *Ephesians*, p. 42.

call. As Catholic and Protestant draw nearer and nearer to their Lord, the spell of His amazing Love will fall on all, and the nearer a man comes to Him, the closer will he stand shoulder to shoulder with those who love Him most. It was a great word of that saint-apostle to the Indians, Bishop Whipple, "It has been my life-long delight to try and find the features of my Lord in the faces of those from whom I differ most."

He was under the spell of the Spirit of Christ's Love, and may the Spirit fall!

CHAPTER IV

FOUR PRINCIPLES OF REUNION.

“TILL we all attain unto the Unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

So writes the Apostle eighteen centuries ago. Is the time far distant still? Will it be long before we all attain unto that *Unity* of knowledge and of faith, which develops the full stature of the spiritual man, and whose consummation is nothing less than the stature of the fulness of our Lord?

If the signs of the times speak truly, the first stage of this grand sequence is at hand. Stronger yearnings than ever are finding fuller voice, and the God who has begun this work will accomplish it unto the end. Mountains of difficulty, doctrinal, intellectual, social, loom less stern and high than once they did. The doctrine of the perfect Unity of the Spirit in the Church under its sevenfold aspect—one Body, one Baptism, one Faith, one Hope, one Spirit, one Lord, one God (Eph. iv. 3-6)—is emerging with ever clearer distinctness year by year. The

present episcopate is boldly handling the Historic Episcopate, not with less reverence than of old, but with fuller consciousness of its limitations as well as of strength; and with honest purpose that a principle that has proved the bulwark of Unity in the Church from earliest ages shall not prove its undoing in these latter days. Individual faith and knowledge of the Son of God are gathering volume into a single stream, in the unity of social Christian hope. Still "*festina lente*" will be the motto of the Churches. Enthusiasts may break line, and speak and act in their own name on either side, but this will only check, not stop, the advance along the whole line. The calm, unhurried approach of both in the spirit of love and of a sound mind, in the meekness of Christ, will most avail.

But meanwhile, four principles abide which may be taken as supplying the basis of the ultimate unity of Augustine's thought. They may well be pondered afresh, and applied to the circumstances of our own time.

1. There must be frank and full appeal to the Bible, interpreted by the ripest and most reverent thinking of the day, and of days gone by. Archbishop Trench has drawn out at some length the principles and canons of Augustine's interpretation of Scripture. "Appeal is only to be made to plain and literal passages of the Bible for foundation truths."¹ "No explanation

¹ De unit. eccl. c. 5.

of an obscure passage is to be accepted contrary to the whole body complex of doctrinal truth.”¹ He warns his readers that a half-truth is very often no truth at all.² He pours just indignation on those who want to undermine Scripture by urging differences between the Evangelists; but he acknowledges the necessity of recognizing the human element in Holy Writ, but *only as truly expressing Truth*.³ He emphasizes the progressive character of Revelation, and the gradual education of men in the knowledge of God.⁴ Only scholarship both reverent and wide can make the appeal to the Bible, on every side of truth, both frank and full.

Here we shall all agree, for “the commonwealth of sacred learning” is already a reality in our midst. The shelves of every student are filled with the choicest fruits of minds of every shade of Church and “Free Church” thought, and the schools of the prophets are interpenetrated with one another’s life.

2. And from that study of the Word great facts emerge, in which principles have their origin and strength. There can be no doubt that the conflict in Augustine’s mind as to the ultimate reconciliation of two varying views of truth, rested on the fullest conviction of the truth and oneness of both. Each view rested as securely as the other on the divine Revelation of

¹ De fid. et op. c. 15.

³ *Con. Faust.* l. 33, c. 8.

² De fid. et op. c. 5.

⁴ *Conf.* l. 3, c. 7.

the Word.¹ Just so is it with us. With him, we accept the Revelation as it stands, however harsh may seem the logical coherence of the truths which it reveals.² For example, let us take this fact. The Bible reveals the reality and power of the direct and personal call from God of the Apostle Paul, as distinct from the ordered call and ministry of the Twelve ordained by Christ. This has been a fact of infinite moment to the Church in her long history. It affords Scriptural precedent of incontrovertible worth as witness to the authority and power of a ministry "not received from man, or taught by man, but coming through direct revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 12. R.V.). Meditation on this single fact must lead to a more accurate apprehension of the actual methods and purposes of God in the establishment of the kingdom of heaven upon earth. We shall learn to welcome brethren of other communities, not

¹ To put a concrete issue :—"Is there an appeal open from the judgment of men to the justice of God? When we remember the ruthlessness with which Augustine insists on the obvious sense of the axiom '*Extra Ecclesiam, nulla salus*,' the answer must be 'No.' But, on the other hand, the answer must be 'Yes,' for there are undoubtedly some 'whom the Father who seeth in secret, crowneth in secret'" (Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, p. 220, [221]). Both these contraries seemed to Augustine to rest equally and finally on revealed truth.

² We do well to bear in mind that "there is no outline in Nature, and no form of words can adequately express a spiritual reality. . . . Our aim is vital, not merely intellectual, and so we shall not strive to gain any completeness of technical definition."—Westcott, *Christus Consummator*, p. 90.

only for their work's sake, but because they are, by the witness of the Spirit, within the covenant of God's direct and personal call to the ministry of His Truth. They are in the direct line of the prophetic office at least, as distinct from the ordered priesthood of the Jewish people. The one was sporadic and irregular, in contrast to the ordained succession of the other, but both were equally inspired of God for their high work.

The second principle, then, for which we desire to plead is the frank recognition of the fact that, just as God raised up ministers of old to strengthen, or even to rebuke, the ordered ministry of His own appointment, so has He done again in our time and generation, to bear witness to certain aspects of His Truth. It will not be easy for some Churchmen to reconcile this principle with their preconceptions of what is right,¹ but the facts remain. The "Free Churches" have, by general consent, a spiritual power amongst those to whom they minister, and the very possession and exercise of that power confer an authority which cannot be denied. It has often been pointed out that St. Paul rested the case for his own Apostleship on this very principle. "If I be not an Apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you," was his argument that prevailed with the Corinthians.

¹ Augustine, in the fifth book of his *Confessions*, acknowledges that he was "long kept in error by his pre-conceived notions of Catholic Truth;" and in the sixth book confesses that what he had often criticized was not the Faith, but his notions of it.

The actual manifestation of the Spirit working through him was apparently the only authority required to prove the reality of his call to the ministry of Christ. We may well remind ourselves here of Archbishop Benson's solemn distinction between the realities of "authority" (ἐξουσία) and "power" (δύναμις) in spiritual things, and his strong affirmation of the truth that, awful as it is to put asunder, even in thought, that which God has joined together, yet the order and succession of "authority" is as nought compared with the quickening Life of the "power" of God.¹ When the Church gives thanks to her Lord for the power which quickens with life her ordered ministries of Truth and Grace, she cannot rightly neglect or despise other ministries which are admittedly quickened by the self-same life.

It will demand no slight effort for Churchmen as a whole to admit and welcome this simple truth.² It lies across their thought as a disturbing factor in an ordered scheme of Christian truth. It presents to their minds the very same kind of difficulty which faced Augustine, who "never succeeded in effecting a synthesis between his working conception of the Catholic Church, and his theological doctrine of Grace."³

¹ *Fishers of Men*, p. 110.

² St. Augustine speaks of "the *unlovingness* of the sceptical habit of mind which receives nothing but what is proved, and suspects everything which is at variance with preconceived opinions." (*Conf.* l. xii.)

³ Robertson, *Regnum Dei*, p. 194.

But just as he found the solution not in logic, but in life, life hid with Christ in the purposes of God, so shall we find consistency not in logical sequences of thought, but in the far deeper reasonings of the soul. That conflicting paradox not infrequently presented itself to the mind of St. Paul is obvious in his Epistles. "Predestinarian doctrine," says Bishop Robertson, "acts as a spiritualizing influence, but at great cost. It excludes logically any true idea of probation, and seems to uproot the base of sober morality." But it has its sure place in Pauline theology. Or again: "The dilemma of responsibility without merit was unsolved, as it is insoluble; St. Paul had offered no solution, he had simply contented himself with affirming responsibility and denying merit."¹ But St. Paul nobly refused to let Truth stand at the bar of intellect alone for judgment. The soul has its reasonings too, and weighs more truly the deeper things of God. It is our part to rest our beliefs, as Augustine did, securely on the Truth revealed, and to feel the spiritual certainty of each truth, even though in the dim workings of a human mind they may have to lie, for awhile, side by side unreconciled. Verily, "he to whom the Eternal Word speaketh is set free from a multitude of opinions."²

3. If, then, however cautiously, the direct

¹ *Regnum Dei*, p. 205.

² St. Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*.

and personal covenant-call from God to ministry is recognized, the next step is made plain. There becomes apparent the urgent necessity for a *unity of spirit* resting on the full recognition of common Life, through God the Holy Spirit. This unity¹ of spirit must come before other links are forged, for Union must be vital and organic, not mechanical, or it will never stand. The bond must be a brotherhood resting not on sentiment or common interests, but on common life² which cannot be cancelled, nor ignored without grievous sin.

This conviction was ever present to the mind of Augustine. "The Catholic Church held together by the Holy Spirit" is the constant expression of his thought. The chief mark is her unity of love and faith and hope, as revealing the One Spirit. "Heretics," he argues, "follow a faith chosen by themselves, and cannot be in the Church, because they destroy its very presupposition—the unity of love." "If the Unity of the Church rests *primarily* on faith, it rests *essentially* on the spirit of love alone,

¹ "The characteristically Christian word is not *ἐνότης* (oneness), but the more fruitful and living term *κοινωνία* (fellowship). . . . Yet the more abstract term has its value. The oneness of the Spirit underlies the fellowship of the Holy Spirit which manifests and interprets it."—Robinson, *Ephesians*, p. 92.

² "The only way to Union, as far as I can see, is through Life. . . . Life will make us conscious of the action of God in us and through us, and the fruits of life will vindicate our divine fellowship in the sight of the world."—Westcott, *Lessons from Work*, pp. 264, 265.

which presupposes faith.”¹ Underlying all Augustine’s doctrine of the Church there is supremely the recognition of the One Spirit, revealing itself in the single yet diverse fruit of love.

So the third principle for which we plead is that a Unity of spirit shall abound amongst *all* who are partakers of the One Spirit, and that it shall find utterance in the active and passive voices of all truly Christian life. The call for common Prayer and common Service in the common Name has been sounded by the assembled Bishops of the English Church, and we believe that the echoes of that call will never die away. But the reality and power of it will only be fully seen in Inter-Communion. It is impossible that the barriers in the way should stand, when once the unity of spirit is allowed to have its say.² It will be felt to be intolerable that there, in the very presence of the Spirit of the Church’s Lord, His disciples may not, in humble obedience, break Bread and drink Wine together in memory of Him, and feed on Him unitedly in their hearts

¹ Quoted from *History of Dogma*, v. 144 f., where Augustine’s most important statements on this subject are found condensed.

² “Let it be agreed that the only circumstance which can make a variety of ecclesiastical organisation sinful is the degrading of it into a pretext for breaking fellowship. . . . There is no breach of fraternity in Scottish Christianity being Presbyterian, and English Episcopalian, so long as the Covenant of Christian Fellowship, expressed by Holy Communion, is maintained. The difference only becomes sinful when fellowship in Holy Communion is refused.”—Hensley Henson, *The National Church*, pp. 299–300.

by faith with thanksgiving. All other manifestations of Unity ring hollow and false, if this means be disallowed. If the contention wax hot about the central place at that holy Feast, let it be his who most truly in spirit can fill the Master's place, when He took a towel and girded Himself to wash His disciples' feet, and gave us the example. Is it not agreed that the official ministry receives its authority from God through the voice of the whole Church, which thus delegates its own functions of ministry for the edifying of the Body of Christ? Surely it would need no high order of Christian statesmanship, if the unity of spirit were supreme, to devise means whereby Inter-Communion might become the visible proof of its reality and power.

4. We have dwelt first on the necessity of the spirit of unity because, as Professor Stanton puts it, "the mind may be too much fixed on the outward unity, to the neglect of the cultivation of the spirit of unity."¹ But we may not rightly stop there. There must be one Body when there is one Spirit.² We may not fully understand why our spirits are clothed with these bodies, but we can clearly see their use. They exist in part to give adequate and single expression to the motions of the soul within. We are truly souls having bodies, not bodies having souls, and the one enduring struggle of

¹ *Place of Authority in Religious Belief*, p. 200.

² "The notion that there could be several 'bodies' with a 'unity of spirit,' is entirely alien to the thought of St. Paul."
—Armitage Robinson, *Ephesians*, p. 93.

life is to set the soul in supreme control over all the members of the body, and make them express her life. For true personality and power there must be, according to God's Word, one Body and one Spirit, and this is as necessary for the Church as for the individual. Dr. Hort truly says, "A society of men deserves the name of a body in the Scriptural sense, in proportion as it becomes a perfect vehicle and instrument of the spirit." And in proportion as the Church accurately interprets and presents the Unity of Spirit¹ she must become one Body, with every member ministering to her abundant life.

But the reality and power of that one Body will never find expression in a dull uniformity either of worship or of service.² In earliest ages men offered prayer in public worship, according to the power that wrought in them,³ not only according to an ordered form. Methods of spiritual warfare have varied in all times as necessities arose. But the sole condition of their efficacy and power was that they must be entirely faithful to the Body, which gave true expression to the Spirit of the Lord within.

¹ "Unity is a spiritual, rather than an intellectual oneness."—Armitage Robinson, *Ephesians*, p. 99.

² "The Unity of which St. Paul speaks is no barren uniformity. It is a unity in diversity" (Robinson, *Ibid.* p. 95), and perhaps we may add, the highest unity in the utmost diversity.

"Unity is not uniformity. . . . The first serious effort to establish uniformity threatened to end (as it did after the time of the Apostles) in a schism."—Westcott, *Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 212, 213.

³ ἡσυχία δυνάμεις αὐτῷ—Justin Martyr, *Apol.* i. 65.

This is the fourth principle for which we contend. We need not stay to prove that it is along the line of Augustine's thought. The history of the beliefs and constitution of the visible Church, as the kingdom of God on earth between the first and second Comings of the Lord, is worked out by him, in noble and impressive forms, in the last twelve books *de Civitate Dei*. But higher than Augustine, it is according to the mind of the inspired Apostle Paul, who categorically affirms, "There is one Body, and one Spirit" (Eph. iv. 4).¹

If these four principles are to stand, they will need careful study on every side of Truth. They assert the supremacy of the Bible interpreted by sound learning, and reverent and prayerful handling of the Word of God. They deduce a law of Love which is quick to detect a brother in another ministry, through his likeness to the Father's face. They demand a unity of spirit, resting on common Spirit-life,² which may freely express itself in inter-communion of worship and in comradeship of war. They look for the Body which God has prepared (Heb. x. 5) to

¹ "One Body"—as well as "one Spirit"—this is the Apostolic rule. No natural interpretation can be put upon these words which does not recognize the obligation of external, corporate union. Circumstances may prevent the realization of the Apostle's conception, but the ideal must ever be present to our aspirations and our prayers."—Bishop Lightfoot's *Dissertations on the Apostolic Age*.

² "The one ground of Union is the possession of a common life, and not any nicely calculated scheme of compromise."—Westcott, *Historic Faith*, p. 259.

give quick and adequate expression to the workings of His Spirit, for the glory of His Son.

Meanwhile, we give a warm welcome to the rising tide of a true *inter-denominationalism*, which is taking the place of a barren undenominationalism of the past. Movements such as the Student Volunteer Missionary Union are doing great work for the Church at home, as well as for the Church abroad, in drawing all Christians together round the Person and the commands of Jesus Christ. Differences by no means superficial still divide the Church of Christ, but we recall, for our encouragement, that differences just as real and vital were found in the Church of the New Testament.¹ St. Peter and St. Paul proposed differing solutions of the race problems that beset the Church. St. Paul and Barnabas differed profoundly in their estimate of the character fitted for missionary work. St. James's categorical assertion that "faith without works is dead" must have seemed to many to require some qualification, in view of the undoubted truth that "we are saved by grace through faith, *not* of works, lest any man should boast." Each side no doubt had its respective following within the Church, *but the Church was not rent asunder*. Every member of it was

¹ "The divergencies of practice between the teachers, and of belief to a certain extent between the disciples, of the two schools (the Jewish and the Gentile Churches) were not sufficient to destroy their true unity."—Westcott, *Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 213.

ready to subordinate himself and his views to the high purposes of the Lord he loved. Here was the abiding secret of the Church's life and power, personal devotion, absolute and entire to Jesus Christ, their present Friend and coming King.

This will be the determining factor in the Church's life to-day. If men strive for the mastery of their own opinions, which are not supported by the grave and tempered wisdom of the great Fathers of the Anglican Church, they know not what manner of spirit they are really of. If men insist on the negative and exclusive operation of the positive truth which they sincerely hold, they may have the tongues of men and of angels, but they have not love. If the yearning for the Oneness of the Spirit has not found articulate speech in a Christian's intercession before God, and in his intercourse with his fellow-men, he has not the likeness of his Lord in His retirements or in His public life.

But the humble seeker after truth and love will so order his life within and without, under the welcomed guidance of the Holy Spirit, that he may truly minister to the edifying of the Body of Christ, till we *all* attain, through unity of faith and knowledge, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of our Lord.

CHAPTER V

THE BIBLE AND THE CHURCH.

THE Bible and the Church are the two standards round which the two camps have rallied their forces. Both have inspired a deep and lasting devotion.

The Protestant clings to the Word of God with a passion which fiercely resents criticism, lower or higher, which throws a shadow on the sacred page. To him the inspiration is divine, because it inspires his soul. His very personality has been steeped in the spirit of the Word, so that it is truly a part of his own life. And these divine and human elements of Holy Writ breathe and burn within him, as they mould his character and command his life.

And the Catholic clings with equal passion to the Church. He argues that Jesus Christ founded a visible Society or Church, to be the organ of His Spirit in the world, the depository of His Truth, the covenanted sphere of His redemptive grace and discipline,¹ and this

¹ Gore, *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 9 ff.

visible Society is the object of his veneration and his trust. He honestly feels no contradiction between the doctrine of the Church as the household of grace, and the doctrine of the justifying effect of individual faith. Justifying faith opens out the avenues of communication between God and man, and enables man to appropriate and use the grace which he finds within the Church of Christ. Neither does he find the obligations of Church membership in any way antagonistic to the freedom of the gospel, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the controlling power of both. And positively, he feels in the doctrine of the Church the mighty power of the social bond of Christian brotherhood. To refer again to Bishop Gore,¹ "As Aristotle said of old, 'The society (the city) is prior to the individual'—prior, that is, in idea, because it is essential to his being really man, because man is by his very essence 'a social animal.' By isolating himself, he hinders, he narrows himself, he perishes; by merging himself in the larger whole he realizes his true individuality and his true freedom. So when God sent redemption upon earth, He sent it in a community or kingdom. . . . 'That ye may have fellowship *with us*'—that is why St. John writes his Epistle—'and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.'"

¹ *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 51.

Let us try and gauge sympathetically the virtues and the defects of these devotions. We shall then be able to note their elements of weakness when they stand apart, and conceive something of their strength were they joined in one.

First, then, the mighty tide of cleansing power that has flowed from the Bible through the moral and spiritual life of the world scarcely needs emphasis here. The Bible needs none to chant its praises or its worth. It has come down the ages singing its own melodies of pardon, peace and power to sin-struck souls, and it will pass on still its deathless chants till time shall be no longer. The wisest sage and the simplest child can find in the words, **THE WORD**—a Person, a Presence, starting up from the very page, as though summoned by the words from another world, and drawing out to Himself the tendrils of the soul. Who, that has read, has not felt that movement of the soul, when “spirit with Spirit doth meet” over the pages of the Word of God?

And what we as a nation owe to these immortal words Eternity alone will show. They are written not in parchment and type, but deep in the fleshly tablets of English character and life. They are “the secret of England’s greatness” abroad, and the strength of her noblest life at home. Truly, “they are spirit and they are life,” and the day that the nation neglects or mutilates the Bible will see the death-knell

of her moral life. We cannot wonder at the passionate devotion the Bible has inspired.

But this Book has not been always and only a pastureland of Truth for souls; it has been a battlefield for bitter strife. The defects of men's devotion to the Word appeared when they began to say, "It is true; I will kill you if you say that it is not." The Protestants took over persecution from the Latins, only to find that it can only be justified by the doctrine of Church infallibility,¹ which they abhorred. They made Scripture as rigid as the old Decretals, and faith was forced along the lines of their own interpretation. In fighting for that interpretation as for property, they did not realize that living faith was being buried under the formula of Protestant theology.² They so over-valued the letter of the Word that the spirit feebly breathed. Verbal inspiration was the only inspiration that they knew, and the voice of reverent scholarship was often shouted down by the clamant cries of a literalism that had lost its power. And the net result of all this can be traced to-day in the

¹ Gwatkin, *Knowledge of God*, ii. 223.

² "In the act of inspiration Protestant Scholasticism distinguishes three moments:—the command to take the pen and write (*impulsus ad scribendum*), the revelation of what is to be written (*suggestio rerum*), and the suggestion of the words in which the divine thought is to be formulated (*suggestio verborum*). Thus nothing is left to human fallibility, God Himself is responsible for the whole."—A. Sabatier, *The Religions of Authority and the Religions of the Spirit*, p. 178.

manifold sects which perpetuate the strife. Chillingworth's dictum became, in an evil sense, only too true—"The Bible was the religion of Protestants," for the face and form of Jesus Christ Himself was being almost lost, even in the perfect Record of His life. The fire of pure devotion to the words which revealed THE WORD, began to dwindle into a spurious devotion to words which veiled THE WORD, and shrouded Him in a mist of human thought.

And, on the other hand, there was pure devotion to the Church. The Apostolic symbols of her life were fondly treasured and faithfully believed. The Church was the Body of Christ energized by His own Spirit, fed by His own Life. She was the living Body of the Lord, organizing her members both for holy worship and for triumphant war. She was also the Bride of Christ, holy and pure, being prepared for the marriage supper of the Lamb. The beauty of Holiness was on her; her fine raiment was the righteousness of her saints. The glow of her Master's passion was on her forehead. She was ablaze with His consuming zeal, and surely devotion to her was the purest devotion to her Lord. That was the conviction that burned itself into thousands of pious souls, and inspired sacrifice and service even to the end.

But the weakness of this devotion soon appeared. As the years rolled on, the life of the Body of Christ began to burn so low that it well-

nigh became a corpse. Her members moved not at the bidding of the Spirit of Life within her, but by the constraint of the officer who ordered the machinery of Church activities. The Bride became so enamoured with her own wealth and beauty that she forgot her Lord. And the result of devotion to the Church was that allegiance to ecclesiastical order took the place of personal obedience to Jesus Christ. The commanding Personality of Christ was overshadowed by the organizations of a Church which was no longer energized by His Spirit or fed by His Life. And so it became true that the Church was the religion of Catholics, and the face and form of Christ Himself were forgotten in what should have been the perfect Witness to His Life.

Thus briefly, we note the points of strength and weakness in the cults of the Bible and the Church. Those who overvalued the voices of the Bible underrated the functions of the Church in its interpretation of the Truth; while those who overestimated the office of the Church were apt to undervalue the support which the Bible alone could give to its life.¹ But the result was the same. Christ Himself was being lost to view amid the trappings of theology or of ordinance. "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him," was the

¹ "How can the authority of the Church herself be proved without belief in Holy Scripture? Her very existence is bound up with that revelation which the Bible contains."
—Stanton, *Place of Authority in Religious Belief*, p. 66.

cry of the simple soul, which longed not for speech about Him, nor for religious rules, but for the Lord Himself. "Sirs," both of you, "we would see Jesus."

But, once more, let us see how these two views range themselves *together* in beauty and in power round the Person of the Lord. It needed a great book to convince us of the deep secret of all preaching power—"Truth through Personality." Truth by itself no doubt is mighty, but it often lies alongside of people's hearts and fails to find an entrance. Personality by itself is mighty too, and influences powerfully others' lives, but lacks often positive leverage for good. But truth placed as a wedge alongside of human life, driven home by the power of a consecrated personality, prevails. Let us enlarge the range of this accepted truth. Take the Bible as the divine *Record* of the Truth lived in the Person of the Son of God. Take the Church as the divine *Witness* to the Truth, living from age to age, with the Life-blood of the Son of God, and pressing home on every living soul the truth she knows. Then shall we get the true perspective of the methods of redemptive grace. It will no longer be possible for the Church to argue her supremacy because she determined the canon; for the truths of the Bible were truths before the Church was, and to witness to them is the sole reason of the Church's life. On the other hand, the Bible needs the living Church to in-

interpret it, and make its truth prevail. The Church may always reverently handle the Bible, and re-state its truth in terms familiar to the modern mind. Old phraseology often loses its edge and its grip on current thought, and it is well that ripe and reverent *and believing* scholarship should interpret afresh to every age the old, old Faith. But truth will demand that whenever the Church teaches, the Bible shall stand alongside to prove or to test, and that that final arbiter must never be neglected or gainsaid.¹ And in its turn, the Bible will mould and fashion the Church which handles it faithfully into a more perfect image of her Lord.

The Bible and the Church are the twin powers whereby the world finds Christ, and both are

¹ "The respective offices of the Church and Holy Scripture may be seen. The Church is the ordained *teacher* of truth; Holy Scripture is the *criterion* of truth by which the doctrines of the Church are proved and tested."—Bishop Gibson, *XXXIX Articles*, p. 527.

"‘The Church to teach, the Bible to prove,’ this is precisely the position of the Puritans in Hooker’s day. The Divine message, in their view, was entrusted to preachers. Sermons they said were the ordinance of God: the Scriptures ‘dark’ and mere reading too easy. Of course the Church is to teach, but to keep the Bible in the background as though its chief functions were to prove what the Church taught, is contrary to the essential genius of the English Church.”—Dean Wace at Islington Conference, 1909.

But we do well to bear in mind the wise caution of the present Bishop of Durham:—

"I think that the dictum, ‘the Church to teach, the Bible to prove,’ needs the most cautious limitations. The Church continually needs the Bible to correct—and the teaching power of the Bible (used by the SPIRIT) is untold, as all spiritual history shows."

divinely inspired for their task. The Bible is divine, final and complete. It is the Revelation of the Son, in Whom all the scattered gleams of truth focus into the single clear beam of the Light of the World. But with what wealth of wisdom and courage and self-sacrifice must the Church interpret and proclaim that final Truth! In wisdom she must summarize the facts of faith and enshrine them in her worship; in the strength of her manhood she must organize for war; in holy self-sacrifice she must obey the letter and the spirit of the Truth. Suffering, poverty, childhood are her special charge, but she has also to train the men who are to lead the nation into Truth.

Both are divinely able for their work. But we must not forget that each of them, like their Lord, have in their measure a personality both human and divine. The Third Person of the Holy Trinity may perhaps be truly and reverently said to be incarnate in the Bible as well as in the Church.¹ Men may detect in the outward form of both, the infirmity they once saw in the Christ of God. They saw Him as a man, and at first judged Him as a man, but it was their loss if they did not detect much more, if they did not see the Divine, under the tempering medium of the humanity of Jesus. Men talk much of the imperfections both of the Record and

¹ The Church as "the Spirit-bearing Body" is Dr. Moberly's frequent expression.

of the Witness of the Son of God which are in their midst, but it will be their shame and their loss if they cannot detect in them the mighty movements of that Spirit of God, Who animates and inspires both the Bible and the Church with His own Life.

The Spirit's primary work is to reveal Christ, to "take of the things of Jesus, and to show them unto us." This will He ever do through the Bible, and through the Church. The one records the matchless story of the actual Presence of the Lord on earth, the other witnesses to the reality of His abiding Presence still. Together they will fulfil their appointed task—if we will let them : they will reveal the Lord.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

IT is in no sense in the spirit of a party pamphleteer that we write thus the heading of a final word. It is all of too serious moment for us to care about snatching a verbal victory for one or the other side. We seek to be led simply by the considerations that have gone before, and in any case desire rather to point the path of responsibility and duty than of privilege and rights.

Let us briefly review our position. We found the ideal of Reunion set forth in the prayer of our Divine Master, and we are constrained to admit the urgent need of the world for its fulfilment. Two great fundamental difficulties seem to stand in the way—one lying deep in individual character, the other lying broadly over modern Church life. The latter presents a problem to the scholarly thinking of our time, but is by no means insurmountable. The solution of the former difficulty can only be found in some deeper unity, which will comprehend two different and opposing views of Truth. With this end in view, we turn our thoughts to one

conspicuous figure of the ages, who in the unity of a single life has sounded the mighty chord of harmony for which we seek. St. Augustine fairly sums up both positions in his transcending personality, and finds their reconciliation not in logic but in life, and that life "hid with Christ in God." We deduce four principles that emerge from the study of his life and work, which make for Reunion of the sundered forces according to Christ's prayer, and seek to adapt them to the practical needs of our own time. Then we concern ourselves for a while with the two standards round which the opposing camps have ranged, and try and set them side by side, as the single, yet twofold centre of the Unity that is to be. And so, finally, we come down from the consideration of ideals and difficulties and principles to the clear light of the practical and the possible. We look round for the translation of it all from the sphere of abstract theory, into the realm of concrete fact. And in simple truth, the historic figure of the Church of England is the first to catch the eye. Her claims are worthy of careful consideration. Before there was an English nation, there was an English Church, and we date our National Church from the gradual fusion of the three great streams of Christian influence in earliest times, which brought the land into subjection to Jesus Christ. The early British Christianity which had receded into the South and West had there prevailed. The Celtic missionaries from Ireland

had entered Britain in the North, and great signs had followed their preaching of the Word; while the influence of Augustine was strongest in the South and, largely, in the East. And through succeeding centuries, in spite of worldliness and weakness, the Church of England has been the counsellor of the nation in the moral and spiritual issues of her life. At the Reformation, "she washed her face" from many stains of her long pilgrimage, but she was the same Church, now Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Reformed.

But we can rest no final claim on her past history. The Church must fill more worthily than heretofore her high calling, if she is to retain her office as the Church of the people of the land. Relics of the past are soon hurried into oblivion by a progressive people, if they do not fulfil the purposes of modern life. They may be left for a while as objects of pathetic veneration, but the main current of the nation's life flows on regardless of sentiment, and in a backwater of self-centred life all survivals will find their end.

The Church of England must justify her claim at the bar of reason and of faith. She must focus and interpret the spiritual sympathies of the people, or else establishment and endowment will not avail to save her from well-deserved neglect. She must lead the nation into Truth, not into a few formal truths. She must hold and proclaim the Truth in its full proportion and power, realizing that the omission of a single

truth leaves a weak spot in the fabric she would raise. The strength and beauty of any individual character is a result for which a definite cause can be assigned. It is no fortuitous concurrence of moral atoms; it is the certain result of the pressure of ordered Truth in its purity and in its entirety.

Now it is just here that the Church has been found wanting since Reformation days. One or two deep fundamental truths slipped somehow out of her teaching, while other truths suffered by strange perversion of their direct appeal. This wrought disaster in a twofold form. First, the Church became as salt that had lost its savour in the Stuart and Georgian days. In missing the spiritual nutriment that certain truths alone could give, she lost her power to purify and beautify the world. And, secondly, earnest men felt in their souls the absence of those truths, and set to work to rescue them from neglect, and established sects which should secure for them their rightful place for all time, in the economy of Truth.

History is indeed "the best cordial for drooping spirits,"¹ and not least when it clearly reveals the way by which we can correct our errors and retrace our path. Let it never be forgotten that each separate denomination witnesses to the necessity, for the soul's best life, of some vital point of Truth; and it is only the power of the Truth they hold, that gives vitality and

¹ Bishop Lightfoot.

permanence to their life. Without the constructive binding power of Truth, their very size is a danger, not a strength, just as in any material edifice. With it, they are strong when they stand, resistless when they move, just in proportion to their fidelity to the Truth they know. And history makes clear this simple fact that, at the weak spots of the Church's teaching, the "Free Churches" have had their birth. Great and vital truths, which were neglected or perverted by the Church, have quickened the souls of many who have found in them their peace and joy outside the Church; and the growing strength of the denominations still reveals clearly the points of weakness of the Church's grasp on Truth.

If this be in any measure a true view of the inward history of the unhappy divisions of our time, then one method of Reunion lies within the range of practical work and prayer. Scholars have pointed out with accuracy and fulness the area of Truth which each denomination has specially emphasized as appertaining to its corporate life, and no one can fail to recognize with gratitude the reality and power of their witness for that Truth. We rightly render honour to the men who strove to recall men to the fulness of the faith, and praise to the Lord of the Church, Who raised them up to fulfil this task.

1. We revere the memory of John Wesley, because he took his stand on a single but fundamental truth—the necessity for personal con-

version to God.¹ We may regret the emphasis he laid on feeling as the final witness of the fact, but we thank God for the trumpet-call which rang through England from his lips, to rouse the Church to the solemn urgency of that half-forgotten truth. But years have gone by, and the Church of England is not yet thoroughly aroused. Her pulpits even now are not yet at one in emphasizing with a single voice the primary spiritual experience of a Paul. There is weakness here, weakness in the very vitals of the Church. According to the author of *Ecce Homo*, the doctrine of conversion is the "*articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*." Earnest men, needing only the ministry of conversion truth, are still leaving the Church of their fathers for one which can minister peace to their souls diseased with sin. The pathos of soul hunger is to be found in Christian England, as well as in heathen India; and a revival of the Holy Spirit's regenerating power in the conversion of souls is one of the greatest needs of our Church life. The prayer, "Turn us, O Lord, and so shall we

¹ "The one great characteristic doctrine of the Wesleyans is the doctrine of the New Birth, or of the necessity of a *sensible conversion* from darkness to light, and from Satan to God . . . and this doctrine has continued to form the favourite theme of their preachers. . . . Many indications are abroad that the Methodist Societies have never forgotten, and will never be able to forget, their venerable founder's almost dying words, 'I live and die a member of the Church of England, and none who regard my judgment and advice will ever separate from it.'"—Curteis, *Bampton Lectures, Dissent in its relation to the Church of England*, pp. 374, 346.

be turned," must be matched by far more faithful preaching of the Master's words, "Except ye be converted,¹ and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

2. Many of us recognize with gratitude that the great Baptist community stands for one abiding principle of Christian truth—the essential spirituality of the Sacrament of Baptism. We may regret the expression that truth has found, we may prefer to rest our belief in Baptism on the mercy of God, rather than on the judgments of men, but in the truth they attempt, however inadequately, to safeguard, lies the secret of their strength. Here, again, is a source of deadly weakness in the Church's life.² The doctrine of Baptisms has received very varied treatment at her hands, but the Church as a whole has failed to impress her members with a full sense of the deep spiritual meaning of it all. "*Buried with Christ by baptism into Death*"—"Baptized into His *Death*," is the awful Scripture context of the truth. Controversy has so overshadowed

¹ For a discussion of the chief passages in which the term is used, see Canon A. J. Mason's *Ministry of Conversion*, p. 2 ff.

² "It is, I fear, impossible to deny that for centuries past a great deal of very extravagant and misleading language has been current in the Church on the subject of Baptismal Regeneration . . . and thereby vast numbers of pious people have been alienated from the Church and carried away into various forms of error and dissent. . . . If the Baptismal Service has been veiled amid a cloud of conceits and mysticisms . . . how can we be surprised that half-instructed people have rejected the truth itself? . . . The Baptist recoiling from the statements of the Churchman about Baptism, seeks elsewhere his definition of the Church of the Redeemed."—Curteis, Bampton Lectures, p. 233 *et seq.*

the spiritual teaching of the Church's formularies that some have even thought the sign and seal of our inheritance to be the priceless heritage itself. A Baptism which does not demand, potentially in the prayer of faith, or actually in the facts of life, a real death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness, is false to God's truth, and a patent snare set by the enemy of souls. When the pulpits of the Church re-echo with this truth, they will only be proclaiming the primitive and Catholic conceptions of sacramental faith.

3. The history of the Presbyterian Church witnesses to the existence in our midst of a system of Church polity which differs in matters of order and discipline from that of the Church. Its loyal adherence to an ordered succession of ministry, based on a reverent and scholarly interpretation of the Word of God, has been a marked feature of its life. By common consent, the Church of England "owes a deep debt of gratitude to many Presbyterians for their contributions to sacred learning, and she is equally indebted to them for many examples of holiness of life."¹ Their missionary enterprise in many lands has done yeoman service to the cause of Christ. And in spite of all this, the Church of England has too often forgotten that the Law of Love is as sacred as the Law of Truth. The moral and physical judgments of Episcopacy have not endeared its principles to the hearts of Scottish folk. One paragraph of the Lambeth Confer-

¹ Lambeth Conference Report, p. 183.

ence Report hints not obscurely at a point of pride and prejudice in the Church's life. "Anglican Churchmen must contend for a valid ministry as they understand it, but it is no part of their duty, and, therefore, not their desire, to go further and pronounce negatively upon the value, in God's sight, of the ministry in other communions." ¹

Still, it must ever be borne in mind that the Church of England holds a central place by common consent among the Churches of the world. With the great Catholic Churches, she is Catholic as they are; with the "Free Churches," she is Protestant and Evangelical as they. And it would be to her loss and shame, if the balance of truth and love were to be held unevenly by her, and if the law of Love were to gain a seeming and temporary victory at the expense of Truth. But the careful delimitation of the frontiers of Truth is now being done so wisely and well, that the future is bright with the promise of a glowing victory for the twin sisters, Truth and Love, over the prejudice of by-gone years.

4. The great body of the Congregationalists or Independents take their stand upon yet another form of discipline.² They reject both

¹ P. 185.

² "The first body of dissenters which actually broke away from the Church of England was that of the Independents, or as they are now more intelligibly called Congregationalists. Their separation began in Queen Elizabeth's reign, about A.D. 1568, the whole question in dispute between them and the Church being then, as it still is, essentially one of discipline, or of Church Polity. . . . The first rule of the

Episcopacy and the Presbyterate as the order of Church government, and frankly admit the individual Christian layman to the fullest share of Church control. We can here watch the actual working of a principle which has in it an abiding element of truth. Most of us can see just where the system fails, and why it fails, but we shall do well to note with attention the truth which gives such vigour to that denomination. It witnesses to the exercise of the rights of spiritual kingship and priesthood, resident not in a privileged caste of clergy, but in the laymen of the Church (Rev. i. 6). Just here again is a weakness of the Anglican Church. She has not been able to make full use of the devotion and intelligence of her laity, in her worship or in her war. The channels along which she has sought to direct their spiritual energies have been for the most part unworthy of robust Christian manhood. But a new spirit is arising in her midst. The call of the Lambeth Fathers has not fallen on deaf ears. "We call upon the laity to come forward, and on the clergy to welcome their coming forward, for work of *all* kinds, and especially for the financial and social work which properly belongs to them." And

Congregational Union of England and Wales recognizes 'as the distinctive principle of Congregational Churches, the Scriptural right of every separate Church to maintain perfect independence in the government and administration of its own affairs.' It will of course be understood that the word Church simply means congregation."—Curteis, Bampton Lectures, pp. 39-44.

when this call is answered, not in the perilous isolation of a congregation, but under the sanctions of central guidance and control, the Church will have restored one of the very earliest of primitive practices for the fulness of her life.

We need not speak of the lesser denominations. They each represent some special point of Truth, and it requires no very close acquaintance with their tenets to see where the pressure is of their direct appeal. The Society of Friends, the Brethren, the Bible Christians, the Seventh Day Sects, the Salvation Army, have all commanded a measure of welcome and respect in proportion to the power of the Truth they hold,—a respect, however, which is tempered with genuine sorrow that they have failed to declare in its fulness the *whole* counsel of God.

5. But the Church of England may be said to stand for Truth, not in its isolation but in its unity. It has been most truly said, that if the Church were to live up to the spirit of her own services, she would be the glory of all the Churches. In her formularies and in her worship, the Church lays stress on each distinctive truth in turn. She is not afraid to isolate them for purposes of teaching or of thought, but she will allow no tyranny of isolated Truth. Each must range itself in order and symmetry round the central figure of the Lord, and must find its utterance only in the harmony of ordered Truth. It is this characteristic that appeals to many minds. Truth is one, and only in the subdued

cadences of many truths can the beauty of her song be heard. And the Church that can strike Truth's fullest chords of beauty and of strength will find her way most easily to the hearts of men. We cannot claim that the spirit of the Church's services as yet really animates her life, but we can welcome the standard she has raised, and pray that she may yet one day be the glory of all the Churches in her grasp of Truth, in the fire of her devotion and in the beauty of her life.

But there is one special principle for which the Church of England stands. We have already referred to her central position amid the Churches of the world; and it is due, on the one hand, to her faithfulness to Evangelical convictions, and on the other to the steadfastness of her contention for Sacramental Truth, and for that area of Belief which it conserves. The energy with which the Church threw off finally and for ever the errors of Rome, did not leave her unstrung and nerveless in her assertion of positive Sacramental Belief. She went straight back to the ordinances of Christ, and fastened on the underlying principle of practical spiritual power therein, and enshrined it in her teaching for all time. It is not our purpose here to trace various interpretations of the doctrine of the Church; it will suffice to point out this one special direction of her witness to the world. Every Church must interpret for itself, sacredly and deliberately, a body of truth found in the pages of the Word, which deals with such things as the organization

of a Church, the purpose of a sacrament, the laying on of hands, the retaining and remission of sins. It is not possible to overlook their constructive power in the scheme of Redemption, since their place is assigned them by the Lord. And we can rejoice in an interpretation of supremely spiritual moment, that finds the consecration of every earthly thing deep in the heart of the religion of "the Word made Flesh," and unveils that truth under sacramental forms.

But, nevertheless, the assertion of a distinctive truth must never be allowed to destroy the rounded completeness of the delivery of Truth, as a single whole. If the Church is in danger of becoming merely one of the denominations of our modern life, it is because she has followed the lead of the sectarians, and occupied herself too intently with a single theme. Her formularies are sound, it is her emphasis that is at fault. It does not always fall true on the whole range of Christian Truth. When the doctrines of Baptisms and the Laying on of hands take their own proper place in the progress of the believing soul, from the beginnings of Repentance and Faith to the triumphs of the Resurrection and Eternal Judgment (Heb. vi. 1, 2), then only will the Church be borne on to her perfection of life and power amongst the people of England.

In some such way as this, can we dimly see the Church gathering her own children back into her life. We cannot forget that "there was but one Church in England, both before and after the

Reformation, and that that Church was, and still is, the Church of England." Her sons left her because she was not faithful—let us grant all that with shame and sorrow of heart. But a Church that truly repents her of her faults, and resolves afresh through the forgiving mercy and power of her Lord, to fulfil more nobly her spiritual office in the nation's life, is not that a plea for Reunion that prevails? ¹

Is it only in dreamland that we can see her faithfully and humbly declaring the whole counsel of God, growing more unworldly in her life, more devoted in her service, more spiritual in her walk with God, drawing the nation into one by the holy fulfilment of her twofold function as the Body and the Bride of Christ, and finally finding her glory in drawing together a disunited Christendom "with one hand touching the rock of History, and with the other the pulse of Eternal Love"? ²

Thus may our Church hasten the Advent of "The Lord's Day, the Eighth Eternal Day, which prefigures not only the Eternal Rest of the Spirit, but also of the Body. There we shall Rest and See, we shall See and Love, we shall Love and Praise." ³

¹ "If the Church is to be truly national, and not a sect amongst sects, we must have a strong Evangelical Revival. . . . An Evangelical Revival is earnestly to be desired on National grounds."—Dr. Inge, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, 1909.

² Bishop Handley Moule.

³ Closing words of Augustine's *The City of God*.

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